

# FOREST LEAVES

## POEMS AND SONNETS

By THE LATE  
Rev. CHARLES E. O'HARA TOBIN,  
*C.F., N.Z.E.F.*

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To John  
from  
Bill  
4/85

## PREFACE.

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*This small collection of poems by the Rev. Charles E. O'Hara Tobin have been published by his widow as a token of regard for her late husband, and she thinks there are many amongst his friends who will appreciate his verses—some were found amongst his papers after his death.*

*Charles E. O'Hara Tobin was born at New Plymouth, New Zealand, in 1879, and was the eldest son of the late William H. J. Tobin of Tauranga, New Zealand. A cadet of an ancient Irish family, and a great-great nephew of John Tobin, whose comedy "The Honeymoon," at one time enjoyed great vogue and popularity.*

*He was a student at the Auckland University and also at St. John's Theological College, Auckland; was ordained priest 1910, and after serving some years in Wellington and in the diocese, was for nearly five years a Chaplain to the N.Z.E.F. in Egypt, Malta and France. On returning to New Zealand in 1919 he was appointed Principal of Hikurangi College, Carterton, Wairarapa, where he died after a short illness, the result of active service, in the spring of this year, 1921.*

## FOREWORD.

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*To follow Fancy's footsteps light  
Where'er she chance to guide,  
Upon the slopes of bush-clad height,  
Or by the lake's cool tide.*

*To hear her voice, though faint and low,  
In rustling of the leaves,  
Or in the darkening streamlet's flow  
As spells at eve she weaves.*

*To use her rod to sound some deep  
Within the human heart,  
To seek her aid to rouse from sleep  
The memory of the part*

*Once played by those who long ago  
On Death's dark sea set sail,  
These my desires, but well I know  
That oft my quest may fail.*

*Nor often may my lips repeat  
The message that I hear,  
In fitting words whose rhythmic beat  
May charm another's ear.*

## REMEMBRANCE.

---

The crimson sunset's parting glow  
Recalls bright days of long ago  
When we together watched the snow  
On Egmont's peak,  
And listened to the babbling flow  
Of forest creek.

Then from the range's sombre wall  
Echoed a *tui's* ringing call,  
A moment stirred the forest tall  
Then hushed in sleep,  
And all around there seemed to fall  
A silence deep.

A jewel set within the west  
Fair Hesper slowly sank to rest,  
And o'er the mountain's snowy crest  
The moonlight fell.  
We parted then, perhaps 'twas best.  
I cannot tell.

For when unbidden come again  
Those old, old thoughts, swift numbing pain  
Sends sudden chill through every vein,  
And even here  
Upon the verge of Taupo's plain  
Thou seemest near.

But dare I hope, when severed now  
From home and friends, that surely thou  
Remembr'est still that parting vow  
Beneath the vine  
That firmly clung to sheltering bough  
Of ancient pine.



For others now may with thee stray  
Beside the stream at close of day  
And watch the changing colours play  
Upon thy cheek,  
While I am banished far away  
And cannot speak.

No marvel that I long for sight  
Of love-lit eyes I deemed as bright  
As stars whose tender gleaming light  
In heaven seen,  
Dispels the gloom that clings to night,  
That sable queen.

O for the days when, lance in rest,  
At some fair Northern maid's behest,  
Our fathers flung with ruthless jest  
Their foes to earth,  
When wealth was not the surest test  
Of human worth.

When for the sake of lady fair,  
A silken knot or braid of hair,  
A knight in tourney oft would dare  
His fate to try,  
In many a gallant charge would share  
With ardour high.

For then I still might dare to dream  
Of crownèd hopes and joys that seem  
As distant now as fitful beam  
Of far off light  
That comes from stars that softly gleam  
On brow of night.

## IN CRYSTAL DEPTHS.

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"Pur remembrer des ancessours  
Les faits et les dits et les mours."  
—*Roman de Rou.*

Amid the leaves beside the pool,  
Beneath the tree-ferns' shadow cool,  
I dreamed of days for ever fled,  
Days when the long forgotten dead  
Not yet had passed that gateway dark,  
Whose gloom still mocks all claim to mark  
The new-waked spirits' onward flight  
Through realms close hid from human sight,  
Days when they trod the hall and lea  
Or faced the dangers of the sea.

There, as I mused, those waters clear  
Mirror'd another who drew near,  
Beyond the image of mine own  
Another face was dimly shown  
With snowy beard and downcast look,  
And there, me thought, beside the brook  
Silent I saw an old man stand,  
A pilgrim's staff within his hand.

"Nay, rise not now," he calmly spoke,  
"Thy roving fancies here have woke  
From sleep my powers to limn the past.  
In spectral guise from spaces vast  
I come old memories to renew."

Around the glade a glance he threw,  
Then, downward pointing, bade me look  
Within the depths of that still brook,  
And wonder seized me, for there drew  
A mist across, and shadows grew  
And changed till in the deep there lay  
The semblance of a bygone day,  
A grove of oaks, a rocky pass,  
The sunlight glinting on the grass,

And back to back a roving band  
 Of armed traders forced to stand  
 By men who from the thickets burst  
 In onset fierce, swift arrows first  
 Their passage marked, and, on the way,  
 Pierced by a bolt a victim lay,  
 But brief the fray and put to flight  
 The packmen, for unequal fight  
 They courted here.

"No ill-clad kerne  
 They faced that day, but warrior stern,  
 Whose dinted helm and plumes of snow  
 Had led the way 'gainst prouder foe  
 And tested were his axe and shield  
 By blows exchanged on many a field,  
 See, with the leader, men at arms  
 Trained in the midst of war's alarms,  
 And archers from the English coast,  
 Fore-runners of the fearless host  
 That broke the ranks at Creçy's fight  
 Of restless France's mailed might."

So spoke the wizard as the scene  
 Faded as though had never been  
 That glimpse from out another age.

"'Tis written on an ancient page  
 That mandate of the English king  
 Did shame on fierce St. Albyn bring,  
 And Comsy's oaks were felled to mark  
 His vengeance for the foray dark."

But soon I saw another sight,  
 Dim in the gloom of clouded night  
 An ancient hall, while nearer stood  
 A group beside a shadowy wood,  
 Lit by the dancing torches' glare  
 Maidens and steel-clad men were there,  
 And in the midst a stately dame  
 With eyes for none but those who came,  
 A band of horsemen through the snow  
 Moving with weary pace and slow,

Their pennons stained and armour rent,  
 And gaze upon the litter bent  
 They guarded there till, when at last  
 They laid it down, the lady cast  
 Her veil aside and knelt to press  
 Her lips with half-hid tenderness  
 Upon the warrior's forehead cold  
 Whom ne'er again might she behold  
 Living as when he left her side  
 To plunge in battle's crimson tide.  
 Then, as the lady turned to rise,  
 A child who watched with wondering eyes  
 Slipped from a maiden's grasp and sped  
 Towards the living and the dead,  
 And, as the vision passed away,  
 The old man said—

"His parents they,  
 That child too young to know his loss,  
 Or dream that should the foemen cross  
 The moors in search of those who brought  
 That body from the field fresh-fought  
 Of Towton, where the crimson rose  
 Lay trampled in th'ensanguined snows,  
 That night might be a night of fear  
 For those who dwelt at Middlemere,  
 Those halls whose rafters once did ring  
 With echoing welcome of the king  
 When the first Edward on his way  
 To Scotland's border made a stay  
 Beneath his vassal's friendly roof,  
 And of his fealty found the proof,  
 Might light the sky with spouting flame  
 If York's fierce warriors thither came."

As the voice ceased I pondered still  
 Upon the wizard's wondrous skill  
 That brought before me days of old,  
 But now another page unrolled,  
 For, shadowed in the mystic deep,  
 Appeared an island rising steep  
 From out the sparkling tropic seas,  
 And palms were swaying in the breeze

That 'neath the summer sun was born,  
 While in the canes the negroes torn  
 From Afric's shores were clearly seen  
 As spots of sable midst the green.  
 Within a bay a little town  
 O'er which a lofty peak looked down  
 Lay sleeping in the summer haze,  
 Silent beneath the sun's fierce rays.  
 Without that old man's words, I ween,  
 I knew from whence that tropic scene  
 Set in the magic Spanish main,  
 Link in the Leeward Islands' chain,  
 There swayed the palms of Stoney Grove  
 Where oft in dreams my fancies rove,  
 And there was spent the early life  
 Of famous Nelson's injured wife.  
 Once more the vision passed away  
 And came in place Aboukir Bay,  
 The darkness of old Egypt's night  
 Let by the glare from close locked fight.  
 Brought into play, the British guns  
 Bore down the might of France's sons,  
 And drooped th'imperial eagle's wing  
 Torn in the lion's resistless spring.  
 Tangled and splintered, in the glare,  
 Wreckage of gallant craft was there,  
 Beneath the light-fleck'd trembling wave  
 Their dauntless crews found fitting grave.  
 Fain would I there have watched the fray  
 Till paled the battle-light and day,  
 Chasing the shadows o'er the sands,  
 Claimed lordship o'er those eastern lands,  
 But while the contest fiercely raged,  
 And grimly ship with ship engaged,  
 Back to the gloom from which it broke  
 Fled swift the fight and I awoke.  
 All that had passed was but a dream,  
 No wizard stood beside the stream  
 Darker and longer shadows lay  
 Across the vale, the hours of day  
 Were speeding fast, and, as I rose  
 To trace once more the path that goes

Around the hill and through the glade  
 Where sunlight filters through the shade  
 Of *ponga* and of *nikau* palm,  
 I felt that as a morning calm  
 Is stirred at times by pulsings light  
 From dying storm of yesternight,  
 So as we lie in slumber deep  
 The fleeting dreams that cross our sleep  
 May hold the memories handed down  
 By sire to son, of smile or frown  
 Of Fortune in the days now dead  
 Of long-loved home or hours of dread  
 And thus at times may we behold  
 The paths our fathers trod of old.

#### AKITIO.

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Among sheep dotted hills the river winds  
 Keeping past bluff and bush her stedfast way  
 In peace or tumult, till at last she finds  
 The homesteads past, the flying salt sea spray  
 In welcome greet her as a new-wed bride  
 Of Tangaroa, lord of ocean wide.

#### DIANA.

---

Southward the driving rain enshrouds each spur  
 The river's face with heavy falling drops  
 Is dimpled as I watch, the branches stir,  
 Waked by the storms' cool breath, while sudden stops  
     The joyous hum  
 Of myriad insects silenced by the chill  
 Though lurking mid the leaves of deep bough'd tree  
 And swift and sure, guiding with careless skill  
 Her steed across the short wet grass I see  
     Diana come



TO FRANCE.

May these pure waters from the mountain streaming  
Bear us upon their breast  
To where some exile from the bush lies dreaming  
And give his spirit rest."

## HOKIANGA IN SUMMER.

Most charming when on splendid summer days  
Beneath a spreading tree we rest and mark  
The joyous flight of fantail or of lark,  
For then the bright sun's downward beating rays  
Turn wand'ring thoughts to many tiny bays,  
Or to thy harbour where some stately bark  
May lie in tranquil ease, and the cool dark  
Depths invite us, while far away the haze  
Dims the horizon. Or to sylvan streams  
Rippling o'er rocky beds, and whisp'ring low  
To drooping ferns that rustle overhead,  
While mid the boughs the pigeons' plumage gleams  
And tui's call and moving to and fro  
The restless parrots seek their daily bread,

## TAUPO MOANA.

Fair Taupo Moana! How calm and still  
 Thou liest 'neath the rays of early morn  
 Soft bathed in tender light. The mists that dawn  
 Revealed have vanished. Thou wilt sleep until  
 Through every valley, past each lonely hill  
 Light playful winds come dancing down, new born  
 Of sun and purest air, and on thy worn  
 Volcanic beach the wavelets work their will.  
 Three giant mountains guard thy southern shore  
 And wreathing steam clouds from their summits rise  
 Like sighs betok'ning mighty throes that shake  
 Our mother earth. When evening comes once more  
 Bedeck'd with sunset hues to glad our eyes  
 They watch thy slumbers, deep mysterious lake.

## AUCKLAND UNIVERSITY COLLEGE.

Distant from busy crowds and noisy mart  
 Our Alma Mater stands, and to her breast  
 We toiling students come in the fair quest  
 Of learning, which should arm us for our part  
 In this stern life of ours, steel every heart  
 To meet the joys and griefs that ere we rest  
 From our life's work, will come to e'en the best  
 Of those that gather here. Should Cupid's dart  
 Disturb our peace, and smile or witching glance  
 Of maiden fair within these buildings old  
 Seem more to us than problem or than prose  
 We'll hide the wound until the College dance  
 Then by the music sweet made still more bold  
 Seek favour from these maids of azure hose.

## VÆ VICTIS.

Unmindful of the sunset gold  
 That bathes the autumn sheaves  
 And careless how the buds unfold  
 Amid the roses' leaves  
 My thoughts beyond my garden strayed  
 My heart is numb with pain,  
 All conscious that one perfect day  
 Will never come again.

The rose upon the southern wall  
 Droops now her golden head,  
 Her glowing petals fade and fall  
 Like hopes for ever dead;  
 A rose that might have graced to-day  
 The breast of lady bright  
 Dies wasted on the bough a prey  
 To all the winds of night.

For me as well the sun is set  
 The rose of hope lies dead,  
 Like bird within the fowler's net  
 I strive to break the thread  
 That holds me captive, binds me still,  
 But struggles yet are vain,  
 Would that I could obey her will  
 Tear from my heart this pain.

My lady bids me dream no more.  
 She bids me quench the flame  
 Love lit within my soul of yore  
 When o'er my path she came;  
 No answering fire her spirit knows,  
 Friendship alone she yields,  
 The snowdrop for the crimson rose,  
 The lily of the fields.



Before me looms that outer dark  
 Where unquiet spirits roam,  
 And where of hope each glowing spark  
 Lies hissing neath the foam  
 That flies before the icy gale  
 Across the deserts there,  
 And gloomy stalks the spectre pale  
 Of heavy-eyed Despair.

For there are those whom anger red  
 Or madness' awful hand,  
 Or chance, or bitter fate hath led  
 To haunt that dismal strand  
 Where dreadful deeds or visions vain  
 Can ne'er forgotten be  
 By those who wander, wring with pain,  
 Nor can from pain be free.

This pain with which my being thrills,  
 This shadow on my way  
 Would fly as flies from yonder hills  
 At dawning of the day;  
 The mists and gloom of sombre night  
 If but my love could turn  
 The wayward heart of lady bright  
 For whom I still must yearn.

# IN THE BUSH.

"But Nymphs and Fairies, by the banks did sit  
 In the woods' shade which did the waters crown."  
 —*Spencer.*

"A glimpse of Fauns and Dryades,  
 Coming with softest rustle through the trees."  
 —*Keats.*

Down in that northern forests' cooling shade  
 My tired body on the moss I laid,  
 Secure within the leafy fastness deep  
 Where e'en the very air was lulled to sleep,  
 Sooth'd by the joyous splash of mountain rill  
 As down it hurried from the distant hill,  
 Whose bush-clad slopes flung back the sun's fierce  
 rays

Each noontide clear throughout the summer days.  
 Past *nikau* groves and graceful *ponga* tall  
 Springling the air with spray at every fall,  
 Seeking the river in the vale below,  
 Careless of time that tiny stream did flow.  
 Well might it linger here and there to cool  
 The fronds of drooping ferns that fring'd each pool  
 Or quench the thirst of stately forest trees  
 Whose massive boughs still waited for the breeze  
 That later to the distant sea would bear  
 The varied woodland scents that filled the air,  
 A fair return for myriad raindrops shed  
 As passed at times some teeming cloud o'erhead.

Silent was now the pigeon's wooing call,  
 Silent the dwellers in the forest all,  
 Save when the flutter of some *tui's* wing  
 A movement mid the drowsy leaves would bring  
 When startled by the shadow of his swoop  
 She sought fresh shelter from the hawk's dread stoop.

Awile I listened to the far off tide  
 Beating against the dark reef's jagged side  
 And crossing as it lapped the snowy sands  
 The ancient folktales learnt in many lands,  
 Faint sounded in my ears as in a dream  
 That mingled music of the sea and stream.

While on the verge of sleep my senses hung,  
 Some drops of water on my forehead flung  
 Bade me awake and meet the downward look  
 Of one who smiled to see the halfshut book  
 Fall from my startled grasp, a volume old  
 Of stories of the days when elves were bold  
 And fairies in the woods of other lands  
 Clasp'ing in joyous dance each other's hands  
 Beneath the moonbeams sported free from care  
 Moving as lightly as the summer air.

Her tresses round her as a mantle drawn  
 Were dark as is that hour before the dawn  
 Ere night across the sea reluctant flies.  
 And darker seem'd those merry sparkling eyes  
 That met my own with careless mocking glance,  
 Seeing me held as yet within a trance.  
 Fairer than Maori maid she seemed to be  
 Tho' bronzed as child of sunny clime should be.  
 Caught in her locks red rata blossoms shone  
 Her slender waist was belted with a zone  
 Of white convolvulus, but freshly torn  
 From some fair forest shrub it clasp'd that morn.

"Be still Opakeha"—her voice was sweet—  
 Dropping a shower of blossom to her feet  
 She sank upon the streamlet's leaf strewn edge  
 And resting there against a rocky ledge  
 Waited for me to speak. Was this a dream?  
 Was she a naiad from the mountain stream,  
 Of which in boyhood I had traced the course,  
 Seeking amid the ferns its distant source.

Ere but to frame a question I could try  
 "One of the Patupaiarehe I"  
 As answer to th' unspoken words there came  
 "A fairy thou?" at once that ancient name  
 Brought mem'ries of the Maori legends old  
 To me, a child, by long dead chieftain told.  
 "Art thou immortal?" "Yea, while flow the streams  
 And bush clad ranges greet the sun's first beams,

While o'er those gleaming sands there flies the spray  
 And bush birds hush their songs at close of day.  
 Or glitter to the stars the southern snows,  
 And o'er the plains the dread nor-wester blows,  
 We spirits of the creek and wood and air  
 Roam as our fancy bids these islands fair."

Her low voice hush'd. But ere a minute fled  
 "Child of that fairy queen with Tura wed  
 From Otea's isle I came in ancient days  
 To link my fate with that of kindred fays  
 Who long ere Maori foot had touch'd the strand  
 Dwelt without let throughout the peaceful land.  
 But when across the seas those warriors came  
 Searching each peaceful glade with spear and flame  
 And in their lust for rule their weapons turned  
 Each upon other, then the fires that burned  
 Within their savage breasts could only fade  
 When quench'd with blood and 'neath the vengeful  
 blade

Of *taiaha* or *mere* dark the life  
 Of foemen ebb'd amid the fatal strife.  
 What wonder then if we, the fairies, fled  
 With saddened hearts and drooped averted head  
 To seek the shelter of the forest deep  
 Or roam the lofty mountain crests that sleep  
 Amid the clouds, from thence to ride the gales  
 That sweep adown the slopes and thro' the vales  
 Where once our race with peaceful rule held sway.  
 At times we watch'd throughout the livelong day  
 The dusky children sporting in the surf  
 Or stretch'd in careless slumber on the turf  
 Beside the *taro* plots where women's toil  
 Wrung for their lords a tribute from the soil."

"What of Te Kanawa, or legend old  
 Of Kahukura, by the Maori told?"

"Te Kanawa we saw, of whom the Maori say  
 That roving thro' the bush one summer day  
 In search of *kiwi* on the wooded height  
 Of Pukemore, resting for the night



He slept in peace beneath a mighty tree  
 Upon the topmost peak, whence one might see  
 Waikato's waters gleam. Into his dreams  
 There came the soothing sound of murmur'ing streams  
 That took their rise in every gully near  
 Till sudden roused from sleep the chief could hear  
 Upon the breeze the strange unwelcome sound  
 Of myriad voices as we gathered round  
 Flocking from torrent wave and mossy dell  
 Summoned from peak and lake by fairy spell.  
 Behind the boulders rough and thickets dark  
 We crouched and watched the slowly dying spark  
 That flickered yet within each ash strewn brand  
 Flashing and fading, now that hunter band  
 Lay locked in sleep amid the forest spoils  
 But waking with their chief within the toils  
 Unseen yet potent, wrought by elfin hands,  
 Woven by moonlight on th' enchanted sands  
 Of some far distant long forgotten shore  
 And powerless as their fathers were of yore  
 When held by phantom bonds, they lay in fear.  
 While as the fire died down we drew more near.  
 At last Te Kanawa, tho' quaking yet  
 With dread of those who cast that magic net  
 Loos'd from his neck the greenstone tiki old,  
 Won from a southern foe in foray bold,  
 And with a shark's tooth that his ear adorned  
 Praying the sacrifice might not be scorned,  
 These as an offering on a splinter hung  
 Within the glow the dying embers flung  
 Athwart that gloomy space. From hand to hand  
 The heirlooms passed throughout our eager band,  
 And as their shadows in that ruddy light  
 Lay on our palms we grasped as fairies might  
 The semblance dim and last the gifts we laid  
 Upon the ground, and sought the deeper shade  
 Content with that we bore, for now afar  
 There gleamed within the east the morning star.  
 While as the day grew bright and darkness fled  
 Homeward adown the slopes the hunters sped  
 No more the *kiwi* on that range they sought.  
 So deep the fear one darksome hour had brought.

Of Kahukura I but know the tale  
 How long ago beneath the starlight pale  
 Led by their laughter to the wave wash'd strand  
 He found the fairy fishers on the sand  
 Of Rangiaowhia, drawing from the tide  
 Its gleaming spoils so stealing to the side  
 Of those who hauled upon the laden net  
 With them he toiled, for never Maori yet  
 Fishing in foam fieck'd sea or quiet mere  
 Tho' skill'd in use of curious hook or spear  
 Had dreamt of such a means his prey to snare  
 As that rush net, elf-wrought with patient care.  
 And so unheeded by the fairy throng  
 The mortal Kahukura laboured long  
 Until the clear cool sky with ruddy light  
 Flushed as the far Orient fires grew bright.  
 With the first gleams of that returning day  
 Seizing their fish the fairies fled away  
 Leaving the net as Kahukura's spoil  
 The prize for which he joined their evening toil.  
 And so ere long there spread from bay to bay  
 The knowledge Kahukura gained that day.  
 And on these island coasts the Maori yet  
 Honour his name who won for them that net."

The maiden paus'd—A moment's silence fell,  
 Then from my sight she vanish'd—who can tell  
 What fancies fairies move. I know that she  
 No more that day came forth to speak with me,  
 Nor yet on other days that I have been  
 Since then within that upland forest green.  
 Perhaps on her some sudden spell was laid  
 Calling her from that deep nook's pleasant shade  
 To seek the presence of her mighty queen  
 Enthron'd in realms by mortal eye unseen.  
 Perchance 'twas not for long her spirit might  
 Endure the ardent gaze of mortal wight.  
 Whate'er the reason, this at least I know,  
 Whether in forest dark or mountain snow.  
 She roves in freedom, she will come once more  
 With tales of long forgotten days of yore,  
 Then may it be my lot with her to meet  
 And for a moment stay her flying feet.

## TO A FALLEN KAURI.

Dethronèd Monarch, round thy branches wide  
 For ages every changing breeze hath blown  
 A message bringing from the ocean tide  
 Or mountain dark. By will of man o'erthrown  
 Thou liest now amidst the trembling ferns  
 That shyly grow within this little space  
 Thy kingdom once, now ruined by thy fall.  
     The greed that ever burns  
 Within man's breast hath marked thy mighty race  
 For swift approaching death, the fate of all.

What untold memories hide within each cell  
 Of that huge frame of thine, for thou wert here  
 In rude far distant days when struck with fear  
 Each Briton bent beneath the Roman yoke,  
 Or Saxon clash'd with Dane in conflict stern  
 In that dear Motherland beyond the seas,  
     E'en then in thunder broke  
 The clouds above thy head, while every fern  
 That dwelt beneath lay sheltered from the breeze.

A thousand passing seasons saw thy form  
 Uplifted high above the trees around  
 Full proudly meet each fiercely driving storm,  
 Ere yet the first adventurous Maori found  
 His way across the surging waves that dash  
 With ever restless force upon the shore  
 Of fair Zealandia. Then in harbour still,  
     At last thou heard'st the splash  
 Of dripping paddles, and canoes that bore  
 From far Hawaiki those that fled from ill.

On yonder frowning cliff they dwelt a space  
 In safety from the ever dreaded foe,  
 Whose oft repeated raids left ghastly trace  
 Beside the stream and in the vale below  
 When tattooed warriors closed in awful strife  
 And sounds of battle fierce were borne to thee

Upon the shrieking wind or wails for those  
     So swiftly hurled from life  
 To dwell in shadows of eternity  
 From all their weeping kinsfolk wildly rose.

How often hast thou heard such sounds as these  
 Thro' years of dreamy languid life slow passed  
 Amidst these stately groves of kindred trees  
 Now sharing in thy fate. But men at last  
 Across yon waste of sleepless ocean came  
 To rule these isles as Britain's heritage,  
 Fair shining jewels set within her crown  
     Imperial and claim  
 Dominion for their race. With foresight safe  
 They founded then each swiftly growing town.

And thus for thee the seeds of death were sown  
 Tho' keen edg'd axe and biting saw thy knell  
 But lately sounded, and with bitter groan  
 And thund'ring crash thy form in anguish fell,  
 No more thou'lt hear the mournful kiwi call  
 Or murmur of yon passing mountain stream,  
 On thee no more the soft and tender light  
     Of Southern Cross may fall  
 Or parting rays of glowing sunset gleam  
 Amongst thy boughs. Departed is thy might.



## NEVIS (LEEWARD ISLANDS, WEST INDIES).

Dear Nevis, circled by the summer sea,  
 Daughter of Vulcan and the Spanish main,  
 Home of my fathers, thou canst still enchain  
 My thoughts and turn my wayward heart to thee,  
 Altho' betwixt those far off days and me  
 When first my sires found shelter from the train  
 Of woes which followed those who fought in vain  
 For exiled James, two hundred years there be.  
 On thee great Nelson found his island bride,  
 When here from harm he guarded thee and thine  
 And yet but dawned his future glowing fame.  
 Beneath thy palms they watched the sapphire tide  
 And with them those whose name and blood are mine  
 In thoughts of love forgot red war's dark game.

## DRAKE.

They call thee "buccaneer," these little men  
 Whose lives are spent in ease or pleasure vain,  
 Who reck not of the stormy days that then  
 Were shadowed by the gloomy power of Spain,  
 That drenched in showers of blood the Northern fen  
 And hid in darkness all that Spanish main,  
 Whose magic voice had called to thee and thine,  
 Singing a siren song beyond the tropic line.

They call thee "buccaneer," though long ago  
 We learned that England's heritage was bought  
 In days of old by men to whom we owe  
 A debt beyond the power of human thought  
 To reckon now. While the seas ebb and flow  
 They croon of those who with our foemen fought  
 And placed upon our island mother's brow  
 The crown of Empire. One of those art thou.

What though from Spanish grasp was wrenched the  
 fold,  
 Washed thro' slow passing hours by scalding tears  
 Of slaves in far Peru, who in the cold  
 Of mountain snows all through the weary years  
 Toiled neath the lash, until they lost their hold  
 On life, and freed by death from earthly fears  
 Left vengeance to the awful hand of God  
 On those who strewed with thorns the path they trod.

That thrice accursèd gold in Spanish hands,  
 Dim with the tears and blood so vainly shed  
 Was wrung to satisfy the bold demands  
 Of Alva's hell-hounds baying o'er the dead,  
 The folk they slew on Holland's sea girt shore  
 Dragging through mire the bowed and grizzled head,  
 Or infant frail. Sure thy avenging sword  
 Fought against fiends the battle of the Lord.

If "buccaneer" for thee be fitting name,  
 Who, when our England at the hands of Spain  
 Dreaded thro' anxious days such bitter shame,  
 Swept with thy comrades victor o'er the main,  
 Then must that word be cleansed of aught of blame  
 For what of cruelty or evil stain  
 When spoil was won from foes in open fight,  
 Do annals tell to dim thine honour bright.

Thy country's foes were thine by land and sea,  
 Whether by homeland coasts or when thy prow  
 Clove that Pacific seen from top most tree  
 Of Darien's darkly shaded western brow,  
 Of Devon's noblest sons thy name wilt be  
 For ever on the roll, world famous now,  
 For in the darkling hour of England's need  
 By men like thee from peril she was freed.

Surely for us those days have lessons yet  
 When men so greatly dared, when Devon's sons,  
 With those of sister shires, without regret  
 Flung life away, rather than foreign guns



Should mar the peace of humble homes deep set  
 In apple orchards white, surely there runs  
 Within their children's veins the blood that then  
 Warmed to the fight for native combe and fen.

How often midst the charms of tropic seas,  
 Or in swift chase of western galleon tall  
 Neath press of sail before th' atlantic breeze  
 That hummed an ocean song thro' mast and fall,  
 Or fighting 'gainst the scurvy, dread disease,  
 Did come some thought of distant rose-clad hall  
 Of home and loved ones who perchance in vain  
 Might watch for thy return, thou scourge of Spain.

And, "buccaneer" or hero, so it fell  
 At last that on the far-off Western tide,  
 Whose voices of thy countless triumphs tell  
 With storm tried comrades watchful at thy side  
 Thy mighty spirit passed—Not in some dell  
 Of thy loved birthplace, but in ocean wide  
 Thine outworn body rests, fair fitting grave  
 For one who loved through life th' unconquered wave.

#### IMTARFA.

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Malta, of old lay neath the Punic sway,  
 Enhancing later, Rome's imperial crown,  
 Loved of Saint Paul—upon a later day  
 Imtarfa on the conflict fierce looked down  
 'Twixt mail-clad Christian knight and Moslem brave  
 As reddened all with blood St. Elmo's wave.